A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday May 29, 1711.

I Cannot but think it ſtrange, that not one of our News-Writers have thought it worth while to tell you that the General Aſſembly of the Church of *Scotland* is now Sitting — That his Grace, Her Majeſty's Commiſſioner, opened the Seſſion of their Sitting on the 10th, by delivering the Queen's Letter to the Aſſembly, and that the Aſſembly have return'd a very Loyal, Dutiful and Pertinent Anſwer; and that all Things go on with Calmneſs, Peace, and mutual Satisfaction there ——

Now, Pray Gentlemen, What can be the Reaſon that none of theſe People take any Notice of this? Is it becauſe they have no Intelligence of Affairs there? Is it becauſe Aſſemblies and Convocations of Clergy on this ſide the World uſed to meet and do nothing, and ſo they expected it ſhould be on that ſide too? —— Or is it that the Aſſembly having diſappointed the Diſigns of a Party, who thought to have embroil'd them with the Government, they do not deſire the World ſhould hear of it?— Which ſoever of theſe Things are, the Reaſon I am not to determine: But ſince the Caſe has been ſo generally omitted, and that I think it is many ways Uſeful that theſe Affairs ſhould be known, I

ſhall

ſhall for once turn the *Review* into a News-Paper, and give you a ſhort Account o. the Sitting down of the General Aſſembly; perhaps the bare Hiſtory may be informing to ſome, and ſome ſhort Hints may make it ſo to others.

On the 10th of *May*, the General Aſſembly, purſuant to Adjournment or Appointment of the laſt Aſſembly, met in the great Church of *Edinburgh*, where Mr. *Mitchell*, Moderator of the laſt Aſſembly, according to Cuſtom, preach'd a Sermon; his Text was *Zechariah* 6. 12th and 13th Verſes.

And ſpeak unto him, ſaying, Thus ſpeaketh the Lord of Hoſts, ſaying, Behold the man whoſe name is the Branch, *and he ſhall grow up out of his place, and he ſhall build the temple of the Lord. Even he ſhall build the temple of the Lord, and he ſhall bear the glory, and ſhall ſit and rule upon his throne, and he ſhall be a prieſt upon his throne, and the counſel of peace ſhall be between them both.*

From the Church, the Members went to the uſual Place of Meeting, where they almoſt unanimouſly choſe Mr. *William Carſtaires*, Principal of the Colledge of *Edinburgh*, one of Her Majeſty's Chaplains in Ordinary for *Scotland*, and one of the Miniſters of the new Church at *Edinburgh*, for their Moderator.

After the Choice of the Moderator, the Queen's Commiſſion, conſtituting the Right Honourable the Marquis of *Annandale* to be Her Majeſty's Commiſſioner to the Aſſembly, was read; and *his Grace* being Seated in the Throne, the Queen's Letter to the Aſſembly was read, wherein Her Majeſty recommends to the General Aſſembly, the planting of vacant Churches with Learned, Diligent and Pious Miniſters, (*Note, Her Majeſty can not be ſuppoſed to know what Treatment the Miniſters ſo planted meet with*) to ſuppreſs Vice and Immorality; to prevent the Growth of Popery, Atheiſm and Prophaneneſs, giving Aſſurances to the General Aſſembly of Her Majeſty's Reſolutions to maintain the Privileges of the Church of *Scotland* as ſecured to them by Law.

After the reading the Queen's Letter, a Committee was appointed to conſider of an Anſwer to it, and to report on *Saturday*. Then his Grace, my Lord Commiſſioner, made a Speech to the Aſſembly, being a Comment upon the Queen's Letter, with Aſſurances of his ſincere Affection for all the Concerns of the Church; and of his Reſolution to uſe his utmoſt Endeavours for the Good of the ſame; recommending to the Aſſembly to proceed with Prudence and Moderation, and if any of their Diſſenting Brethren ſhould apply to be received into Miniſterial Communion, he hoped the Aſſembly would ſhew a Readineſs to receive them.

The Moderator made a Speech in return to his Grace's Speech aforeſaid, Summing up the Heads of the Queens Letter and of his Grace's Speech, recommending the Intereſt and Concerns of the Church to his Grace; and taking Notice how their Conſtitution was threatned with the reſtoring the Patronage, which was deſtructive of their being as a Church, and contrary to their Principles —— How unjuſtly they were repreſented in the South of *Britain*, as a deſpicable and divided Body, and how falſe the pretences of PERSECUTION in *Scotland*, *ſo much inſiſted on in* England, had been; concluding with due Expreſſions of their Duty to Her Majeſty, and their Reſolutions to do all Things as became them, with Calmneſs and Moderation.

This was the happy beginning of the Aſſembly. The next Day, *May* the 11th, was, as is the uſage in every Aſſembly, ſet apart for a Day of Prayer, and no publick Buſineſs enter'd upon.

The 12th, the Aſſembly met again.

A Committee being appointed to draw up an Anſwer to her Majeſty's Letter, they made their Report accordingly; and deliver'd a Draught of an Anſwer, which being read, was approven without any Amendment; and Voted *Nemine Contradicente*, which Anſwer (*I ſhall give you the Copy of it hereafter*) was delivered to his Grace, the Lord Commiſſioner, to be tranſmitted to Her Majeſty, and was ſent away by an Expreſs the ſame Night. The

The Committee of Overtures presented an Overture to the Assembly, recommending to all the Ministers of the Church of *Scotland*, That in their publick Prayers, after praying for the Queen, that they should pray for the Protestant Succession, as Establish'd in the Illustrious Family of *Hannover*; which Overture was also Voted, and approved *Nemine Contradicente*: Note, *This will also disappoint some of us, and undeceive others, about the Presbyterians being Friends to the Pretender.*

The same Day from the Committee of Bills was brought in, their Opinion relating to two Papers sent to the Assembly from the Synod of *Ross* and *Sutherland*, concerning the barbarous Treatment of Mr. *Chisholm* and Mr. *Morrison*, two Ministers appointed by the Presbytery; the one to read the Edict of the Presbytery at *Gearloch*, and the other planted in the vacant Church there.

NOTE, *These are the two Papers printed in the* Reviews *of the 22d and 24th Instant*, N° 25. *and* 26.

This Opinion was, That the said two Papers should be read in open Assembly, and be referr'd to a select Committee, to consider what was fit to be done therein—The Assembly was hardly ever seen to be more sensibly affected with the reading of any Paper, than with these two —— and when they were read, *His Grace*, my Lord Commissioner made a Speech from the Throne, expressing his great Surprize at the Occasion, and his particular Dissatisfaction at such Barbarous and Inhuman Treatment, giving the Assembly Assurance, that both those Affairs should be directly and fully laid before Her Majesty, in order to the punishing the Authors thereof, and preventing the like for the Future.

Thus I have given you a Journal of the Assembly, as far as relates to publick Affairs —— which I thought might be of Use for general Information on every side.

1. Those whose Fears for the Ministers in *Scotland*, lest having had great Occasion of Resentment from the Insults of the Episcopal People in *Scotland* and elsewhere, they should carry those Resentment into Heats, Feuds, and undutiful Behaviour, to the damage of their own Interest, and displeasing their Sovereign, may see the Ministers of *Scotland* know better their Duty, their Interest, and how to manage their Affairs.

2. Those who have reported the Presbyterian Ministers in *Scotland* to be Turbulent, Uneasy, Rash, Rigid, Furious and Ungovernable, (*I use their own Words*) may find room to Blush, and must own that all the Prudence, Calmness, Temper, Moderation, Duty and Respect, and that even under the most abominable Treatment than any Body of Christians ever acted with, is the just Character of their Behaviour.

3. The Madness and Rage of the Episcopal Dissenters in *Scotland* is now made undeniably Manifest, and all their pretences to Suffering, Patience and Persecution, appear ridiculous and absurd.

4. The Episcopal People there may here learn, that Rabble and Tumult is not their way; that the Presbyterian Establishment does and must stand, neither they, nor the Gates of Hell can overthrow it; and they ought to *Stone*, and *banish from them* those Sons of Delusion —— who have perswaded them that Her Majesty would pull down the Presbyterian Establishment in *Scotland*, to set them, *the Episcopal Party*, up; since the Liberties of the Presbyterian Church are founded upon the Laws, which Her Majesty is sworn to Maintain; confirm'd by the Union, which neither Queen or Parliament can alter; and Her Majesty has again repeated her Assurances, and given her Royal Word, That she will maintain them — So that if they will not be Contented with any thing but a R[illegible]-stablishment, they have nothing to do but to Despair, *For it can never be*, while a Revolution Queen, or a Revolution King sits upon the Throne. But if they will restore the Episcopal Church in *Scotland*, they must restore the Pretender first, and then they may have some hopes of it.

Nor are they ignorant of this, I mean the Wisest of them; and this is one Reason why as many Episcopal People as are in *Scotland*, generally speaking, so many Jacobites

bites may be ſuppoſed to be there; nor is it any Offence or Slander to them to ſay thus, generally ſpeaking. The Epiſcopal Intereſt in *Scotland*, and the Jacobite Intereſt is all one.

Of which I ſhall ſay more in my next.

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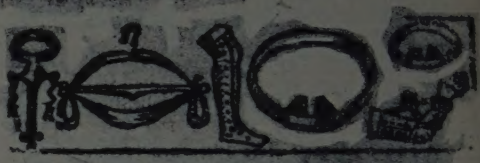

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Printed for and ſold by *John Baker* at the *Black-Boy* in *Pater-Noſter-Row*. 1711.